

Chief's Update
June 3, 2013

Dear Tempe Police Employees,

The purpose of this update is to discuss organizational leadership and the many opportunities for growth and development at Tempe PD.

Assuring the continued success of a complex organization of nearly 500 employees who provide police services 24 hours a day is a complex and demanding management process. Assuring that Tempe Police employees are well prepared to meet the challenges of the future requires collaboration, foresight and tenacity. Assuring that we do not become complacent or stagnant requires not only that we are open to change, but that we actively seek it out.

One of the most important goals for me as Chief continues to be creating real opportunities for career development and advancement throughout the organization. When supervisors provide support and opportunities for growth for employees, the benefits are directly transferred to the citizens we serve. Assuring that such opportunities exist is one of the indicators of an adaptable, resilient and healthy organization, in which employees are prepared to meet the challenges of the future.

Recently Asst. Chiefs Carbajal and Rush sent an update regarding transitions at the Assistant Chief and Commander Level, and prior to that, notifications were made about Lieutenant and temporary Sergeant promotions. How do these changes affect you directly? Let's take a look...

Recently I have been able to spend time with employees currently serving successfully as temporary sergeants, as well as with several officers interested in the current sergeant testing process. I have been very impressed with the professionalism and capabilities of these candidates, and the ideas they have for the future of Tempe PD. Out of this testing process, it is highly probable that at least (3) sergeants will be promoted over the next year, in part due to retirements. In other areas, a veteran patrol sergeant recently was chosen to oversee our Special Victims Unit and similarly, a newly promoted Communications Supervisor brings with her 15 years dispatch and past police experience to our Communications Bureau.

With respect to the rank of lieutenant, we currently have (3) lieutenants serving in a temporary capacity in Patrol. One position is anticipated to be made permanent over the next six months. Further, Lt. Michael Collins was selected – as the first lieutenant since re-introducing the rank back into our command structure – to participate in the 10-week FBI Academy in Virginia; he will be returning to Tempe in mid-June. This is an honor, one which will benefit the entire Investigations Division, as Lt. Collins will be able to share with his command the most current law enforcement training and practices. Cmdr. Mark Perkovich has been serving at the Regional Police Academy since September 2012, which continues to be a great opportunity for our agency. This investment and partnership with our fellow law enforcement agencies is reimbursed by AZPOST, and provides a tremendous platform to shape the future of law enforcement not only in Tempe, but across Arizona, and beyond.

Effective today, June 3, Commander Fran Santos will be assuming a temporary special assignment at the City Attorney's Office, where she will assist with police-related legal issues, to include matters involving asset forfeiture as well as civil litigation. This assignment will assist in streamlining workload for both the Police Department and the City Attorney's Office, and provides Tempe PD the opportunity to have an 18-year veteran officer and attorney working on projects which will directly affect line-level police operations and legal policy for years to come. This in turn creates a developmental opportunity for one of our lieutenants. Lt. Mike Horn will assume the role of temporary Commander of the Organizational Services Division. As the OSD Commander, Mike will provide operational continuity to the Personnel Services Bureau, as well as command responsibilities for the Media Relations & Community Affairs Unit, the Internal Affairs Unit, the Detention Section and Volunteers in Policing.

So, to answer the question I posed earlier, how do these changes affect you? First, by affirming that we are committed to providing continuing opportunities for growth and promotion. Second, by demonstrating that through lateral, temporary and promotional opportunities, superior training, and regional partnerships, we are second to none in offering a wide array of experience and assignments. And third, by challenging you to be the one making a plan, executing it, and pursuing change, opportunity and promotion.

It is your professionalism, focus, and drive that make us successful in fighting crime and keeping Tempe safe.

Continue working toward your goals, and stay safe!

Sincerely, Tom